

Chore Corps volunteers lend a hand to seniors in need of aid

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By **MELISSA LAFLAMME**
Staff Writer

Time helping others is time used for a good purpose, say volunteers who help the elderly remain in their homes.

Through Chore Corps, a program that offers help to elders who otherwise might not receive it, seniors can continue living in their homes — assured there is an outside support system available to them.

Chore Corps imparts a sense of security for elders, and also a rewarding sense of purpose for its volunteers.

"I just had had a few rough years and felt like I didn't have a purpose in

my life," said Tootie Chase, who volunteers for Chore Corps assisting a pair of elders.

Chase said while she doesn't recall the steps that led her to Chore Corps she said she believes it has broadened her life for the past year and a half.

"I can't remember how I stumbled onto Chore Corps," she said explaining that her support efforts are fruitful. "It's rewarding, I just don't understand why more aren't doing it."

Program director Teresa Volta said the aim of the program is more than one-sided.

"The idea is to help elders stay in their own homes and their community, instead of being institutionalized,"

she said. "We try to find out what their interests are," she said of the volunteers.

A number of chores for elders can be done based on a volunteer's skill sets and desires. Chase accommodates her elders with car trips to doctor appointments and the grocery store.

"When I have to go to the doctor I call Tootie and she comes and takes me to the doctors. She's really wonderful," said Joan Reynolds, a senior with the program. "When I go to the doctor she goes right in with me and she takes notes in case I don't understand them."

Their relationship is more than

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Program seeks people to help

Chore Corps, a program that helps elders remain

Cornish in their homes and out of nursing facilities is low on volunteers.

Program director, Teresa Volta said as seasons change, the demand changes with them.

"It ebbs and flows," she

said of outside requests for help from elders. "Sometimes it's all at once, it's seasonal."

The program, which is coordinated through RSVP, matches volunteers with elders in Sullivan and Grafton counties.

It is open to the disabled and others over the age of 60.

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once a month, Chase said as she explained that rounds of phone calls are exchanged amid visits.

Allan Berggren, a retired ear, nose and throat physician who signed up for Chore Corps almost four years ago, said he wanted to use his handyman credentials to gain more self-satisfaction and assist others.

"I developed some skills with

home maintenance stuff through my own stuff over the years and it was nice to share that," he said.

Chase and Berggren gain from their relationships. "She's such a delightful person," Berggren said.

"It's a good fit because she has these social and community skills and I'm facilitating her doing that."

Besides Chore Corps,

Berggren collaborates with other organizations with the hope more people someday, somewhere volunteer their time.

"I think a lot of people have concluded that retirement isn't just for play," he said.

Melissa LaFlamme can be reached at (603) 543-3100, Ext. 102 or mlaflamme@eagletimes.com